

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 2098

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, WB, GE, GW

SUBJECT: BRANDT, SCHUETZ AND HONECKER COMMENT ON QUADRIpartite
AGREEMENT

1. SUMMARY. PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS BY FEDERAL CHANCELLOR
BRANDT, GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ AND GDR CHIEF HONECKER
IN LAST FEW DAYS, ILLUSTRATE CLEARLY DIFFERENCES BET-
WEEN GDR AND FRG IN INTERPRETING QUADRIpartite AGREE-
MENT. END SUMMARY.

2. CHANCELLOR WILLY BRANDT, ADDRESSING DECEMBER 8
BERLIN SPD PARTY CONGRESS, CALLED FOR STRICT INTERPRETATION
AND FULFILLMENT OF QA. HE REMINDED GDR THAT QA WAS SAME
DOCUMENT FOR ALL PARTIES AND THERE WAS NO SPECIAL EDITION
FOR GDR. FOR FIRST TIME, BRANDT PUBLICLY WARNED GDR
THAT THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED TO DISTURB QA THROUGH ARBITRARY
PRACTICES AND INTERPRETATION MUST CONSIDER FAR-REACHING
CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS. BRANDT ALSO STATED THAT
FRG PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN WOULD NOT BE DIMINISHED BUT
WOULD BE MAINTAINED AND THAT QA PROVIDED NOT ONLY FOR
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MAINTENANCE OF TIES BETWEEN FRG AND WEST BERLIN BUT ALSO

FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THESE TIES. BRANDT ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT RECENT INCREASE OF CURRENCY-EXCHANGE REQUIREMENTS BY GDR REMAINED LIVE ISSUE AND FRG WOULD CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR CHANGES, PARTICULARLY CONCERNING NEW REQUIREMENTS LEVIED ON PENSIONERS. HE PRAISED ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF QA AND SAID THAT SOVIET UNION KNEW THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND USSR COULD ONLY BE AS GOOD IN GENERAL AS WAS SITUATION IN BERLIN.

3. REPORTING TO SPD ON BERLIN SITUATION, GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ SAID RECENT GDR MEASURES WERE ATTEMPT BY GDR TO REDUCE ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER QA TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT ONE HAD DIFFICULTY IN RECOGNIZING ORIGINAL AGREEMENT. HIS LETTER TO GDR COUNCIL OF MINISTER'S CHAIRMAN SINDERMANH HAD NOT YET BEEN ANSWERED BUT SENAT, SCHUETZ SAID, WOULD NOT LET THE MATTER DIE UNTIL GDR WITHDREW RECENT MEASURES AND RETURNED TO BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISITS ARRANGEMENTS. SCHUETZ COMMENTED THAT RECENT DIFFICULTIES WITH GDR WERE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OLD STYLE BERLIN CRISES.

4. HONECKER MEANWHILE POINTEDLY TOOK TO SOVIET AIR WAVES DECEMBER 9 TO REITERATE GDR'S LONG FAMILIAR CONTENTION THAT STRICT INTERPRETATION OF QA REVOLVED MAINLY ABOUT PRINCIPLE THAT WEST BERLIN WAS NOT PART OF FRG AND MUST NOT NOW OR IN FUTURE BE RULED BY IT. IN INTERVIEW CARRIED ON SOVIET RADIO AND TELEVISION, AND REPORTED EXTENSIVELY BY EAST GERMAN MEDIA, HONECKER SOFTENED EVER SO SLIGHTLY, HOWEVER, HIS EARLIER STANCE ON REDUCTION (ABBAU) OF FEDERAL PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN (BERLIN 1892), CLAIMING INSTEAD THAT QA MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CURTAILMENT (EINSCHRAENKUNG) OF FEDERAL PRESENCE IN CITY. IN ANOTHER QUIZZICAL WAVE OF OLIVE BRANCH, HONECKER ADMITTED THAT QA PROVIDED THAT "CERTAIN TIES" BETWEEN FRG AND WEST BERLIN MIGHT BE DEVELOPED, BUT MAINTAINED GDR POSITION BY USING TERM "VERBINDUNGEN" RATHER THAN "BINDUNGEN" AND BY LEAVING NO DOUBT THAT IN GDR VIEW THIS PROVISION DID NOT EXTEND TO GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES. IN CONCLUSION, HONECKER REPEATED OFT-ISSUED WARNING THAT ANY EFFORT TO INCORPORATE WEST BERLIN INTO FRG STATE SYSTEM WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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UNILATERAL ALTERATION OF AND DO STRIKING VIOLENCE TO QA.

5. COMMENT. BRANDT'S WARNING TO GDR THAT ITS ATTEMPTS TO INTERPRET UNILATERALLY QA COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES WAS STRONGEST STATEMENT HE HAS MADE TO DATE. WHILE THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT BRANDT WAS MOTIVATED, AT LEAST IN PART, BY NEED FOR POLITICAL FENCE-MENDING IN BERLIN FOLLOWING FRG POLICY REVERSAL CONCERNING NEGOTIA-

TIONS WITH PRAGUE, HIS SPEECH WAS WELL RECEIVED AT CONGRESS AND EVEN SPRINGER'S "DIE WELT" HAD SOME GOOD WORDS FOR CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH. HOWEVER, GUNTER STRUVE, CHIEF OF SENAT PRESS OFFICE, TOLD MISSION OFFICER AT CONGRESS THAT BERLIN'S SUGGESTIONS FOR SPEECH HAD BEEN EVEN STRONGER. LATER ONE OF BRANDT'S SPEECH WRITERS CONFIRMED THAT FIRST DRAFT HAD INDEED CONTAINED STRONGER LANGUAGE BUT THAT BRANDT'S ADVISERS HAD WATERED IT DOWN SOMEWHAT. SENATOR FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS STOBBE COMMENTED TO MISSION OFFICER THAT HE THOUGHT SPEECH WAS VERY GOOD BUT ADMITTED THAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN EVEN STRONGER.

6. ALTHOUGH TIMING SOMEWHAT SUSPICIOUS, FACT THAT HONECKER'S REMARKS CAME SO CLOSELY ON TAIL OF THOSE MADE BY BRANDT AND SCHUETZ STRIKES US AS PROBABLY LARGELY COINCIDENTAL. FIRST, ON ASIS OUR EXPERIENCE, GDR NEEDS SOMEWHAT MORE LEAD TIME TO GIN UP AND CLEAR ITS REBUTTALS TO SUCH FRG ATTACKS, AND, SECOND, GENERALLY SUBDUED TONE OF HONECKER'S STATEMENT IS SOMEWHAT OUT OF CHARACTER FOR GDR RESPONSES MADE UNDER PRESSURE. WE WOULD THEREFORE VIEW INTERVIEW PRIMARILY AS PART OF GDR'S ONGOING EFFORTS TO PROPAGATE ITS OWN INTERPRETATION 'IN THIS CASE SUPPORTED BY USSR) OF QA TO ALL, EAST AND WEST, PARTICULARLY AGAINST BACKGROP OF BRANDT'S FORTHCOMING TRIP TO PRAGUE AND BONN'S RENEWED EFFORTS TO REINVIGORATE ITS OSTPOLITIK.KLEIN

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